THE INNOCENCY AND Conſcientiouſneſs OF THE QUAKERS

ASSERTED and CLEARED FROM

The *Evil Surmiſes*, *Falſe Aſperſions*, and *Unrighteous Suggeſtions* of Judge KEELING; expreſſed in his Speech made the ſeventh of the ſeventh Month at the Seſſions-Houſe in the *Old-Baily*, being the day appointed for the *Tryal* of ſome of the ſaid People by the late Act made to Prevent and Suppreſs *Seditious Conventicles*.

Wherein alſo is ſhewed that this Law doth not concern them, they being no ſeditious Sectaries, nor Contrivers of Inſurrections, nor Evil-doers; therefore no juſt Law is againſt them.

He that juſtifieth the Wicked, and he that condemneth the Juſt, even they both are an Abomination to the Lord. PROV. 17. 15.

Publiſhed by a lover of Truth and Righteouſneſs, *W. S.*

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THE INNOCENCY AND Conscientiousness OF THE QUAKERS

ASSERTED and CLEARED FROM

The Evil Surmises, False Aspersions, and Unrighteous Suggestions of Judge KELLING; expressed in his Speech made the Seventh of the seventh Month at the Sessions House in the Old-Bailey, being the day appointed for the Tryal of some of the said People by the late Act made to Prevent and Suppress Seditious Conventicles.

Wherein also is shewed that this Law doth not concern them, they being no Conditions Sectaries, nor Contrivers of Insurrections, nor Lurk-doers; therefore no just Law is against them.

[illegible]

Published by a Lover of [illegible]

[illegible]

To the Judicial and Impartial READER.

EVer since the Devil (that enemy of Mankind, who is the leader of Nature out of its course) got rule in Man's heart, his work and way hath been to stir up his Instruments, first, to cast Ignominious reproachful names upon the true Worshippers of God, as New Sects, Turners of the World upside down, Pestilent Fellows, Sowers of Sedition, Ring-leaders of Sects, Blasphemers, Hereticks, Seditious Sectaries, Contrivers of Plots, *and* Stirrers up of Rebellion, &c. *Then when he hath by his Emissaries cloathed them in this mantle of Reproach, he can the easilier bring his designs to pass upon them; whether it be to Imprisoning in nasty infectious holes; or Whipping, Banishing, Burning or Hanging, which hath been his work through Ages, among both false* Jews *and false* Christians, *as well as among those called* Heathen, *to this day: for as once among the* Heathen, *it was crime enough to cause the true* Christians *to suffer, to have the Name of a* Christian (*which was a name of Reproach in that day*) *and carried enough with it to be guilty of all Crimes, in the judgment of the* Heathen, *who*

believed all that was ſpoke and publiſhed againſt them, though they ſaw no proof: The like Parallel is now; we have the name Quaker *given us in reproach and deriſion, and its crime enough to cauſe us to ſuffer (before and among ſome) to have that name; And what is ſpoke and publiſhed, ſurmiſed and evilly ſuggeſted of us, many believe without any manifeſt proof: but the Wiſe and Judicious will not receive and believe every Report, nor give Judgment of any Perſon or People becauſe of a Name, Speech, or Report, though it be from the mouth of a Judge, but will deſire to know the Truth; therefore to inform ſuch is this Reply following publiſhed.*

And we may truly ſay for ourſelves, as Tertullian *in his Apologie once ſaid for the* Chriſtians, *when the* Heathen *called their Society, Meetings or Aſſemblies,* Factious; Did we ever *(ſaith he)* aſſemble to proclaim the hurt of any one? *As we are in the particular, ſo we are in the general, that is to ſay, In whatſoever ſtate we are found, we offend no body, we injure no body: And further, ſaith he,* when any vertuous or godly People are aſſociated, when any pious or chaſt perſons aſſemble together; their Union ſhould not be called a Faction, but a Lawful Society. *pag.* 142.

The

The Innocency and Conſciencioufneſs of the Quakers *aſſerted and cleared from the evil Surmiſes, falſe Aſperſions, and unrighteous Suggeſtions of Judge* Keiling; *expreſſed in his Speech made the 7th of the 7th month, at the Seſſions-houſe in the Old Baily, &c.*

Judge.

BEcauſe this day was appointed for the Tryal of thoſe People, And in as much as many are come hither expecting what will be done, I ſhall ſay ſomething concerning them and their Principles, that they might not be thought worthy of pity, as ſuffering more than they deſerve: for they are a Stubborn Sect; and the King hath been very merciful with them. It was hoped that the Purity of the Church of England would ere this have convinced them, but they will not be reclaimed.

Anſwer.

Our Converſation for theſe many years, hath been noted, and ſtrictly obſerved by many, and hitherto we have not been found Tranſgreſſors of any Law which is made to preſerve mens Perſons or Eſtates, or for the puniſhment of Evil-doers; And ſo have not given the Magiſtrates occaſion juſtly to appoint days of Tryal for us.

For the Law once in Tables of Stone, and all other juſt Laws were and are added becauſe of mans degeneration from the Law and Righteous Principle of Life, which was once, or at the beginning, placed in his heart: So when man fell from his obedience to this Righteous Law (which we ſay was not in a Book, nor in Tables of Stone, in the beginning, but in the Heart) and abounded in Acts of Cruelty, Violence, Oppreſſion and Idolatry, Then becauſe of theſe Tranſgreſſions was that Outward Law added, in order to limit, bridle and puniſh, and alſo to bring Mankind back again in a meaſure to that which he degenerated from, as *Moſes* witneſſeth (*viz.*) to the Word in the mouth and in the heart, that they might hear it and do it (or obey it.) And true Chriſtians are come to Chriſt Jeſus, who is the Power of God; and are created anew in him unto *good works*, that they

they ſhould walk in them; and are made Witneſſes of that *Glorious Promiſe fulfilled in them, (viz.) as to have the Law written in their hearts, and the Fear of the Lord put into their inward parts*; which Law and Fear teacheth to depart from evil, and crucifieth that tranſgreſſing ſpirit within, from whence all manner of wickedneſs proceeds; and againſt ſuch there is (or ought to be) no Law, *they being a Law to themſelves*, as it is written, *The Law is not made for the Righteous man; but for the Lawleſs and Diſobedient, for the Ungodly and for Sinners, for Unholy and Prophane, for Murderers of Fathers and Murderers of Mothers, for Manſlayers, for Whoremongers and Buggerers (or abuſers of themſelves with mankind) for Man-ſtealers, for Lyars, for Perjured Perſons, and any other evils which are contrary to ſound Doctrin.*

And now ſeeing we are preſerved by the Power of the living God, (whom we fear and ſerve) from thoſe and ſuch-like evils (which are the occaſion of Law and Magiſtrates, otherwiſe there would be no need of either) and yet notwithſtanding are perſecuted and thronged into naſty Holes and Priſons, and guarded with a great many Clubmen and Billmen, and haled before Judgment-Seats and Rulers, as if we were great malefactors: This makes People flock together, and expect, and alſo wonder what will be the end of theſe things; That People againſt whom no evil can be juſtly charged, ſhould be the greateſt Sufferers in this Generation: And pity and compaſſion will ariſe in thouſands, who ſhall hear or ſee our Sufferings for Innocency and Conſcience towards God, notwithſtanding our cruel Adverſaries endeavour to cloath us in Wolves-ſkins, to make people believe that we are the Beaſts of Prey, and a *Stubborn Sect, which will not be reclaimed by the Mercy of the King, nor the Purity of the Church of England.* As for the *Kings Mercy* it cannot ſave us, if we tranſgreſs againſt God, and make ſhipwrack of Faith and a good Conſcience; his Righteous Judgments will find us out, and we muſt give an account to him; and walk ſo, as we may partake of *His Mercy*, which the King as well as the Beggar hath and will have need of alſo; howbeit we never yet forfeited our Intereſt in the King's Promiſes of *Liberty to tender Conſciences*, ſo often renewed by him; though it appears by this Judge's ſo much inveighing againſt us, that he would fain make people believe we do not deſerve our Liberty or Intereſt therein; but that will not clear him nor them in the ſight of God concerning thoſe Promiſes.

And

And as for the *Purity of England's Church* it's out of our ſight, except it conſiſts much in *Swearing*, which the Judge ſaith is a ſpecial part of God's Worſhip: If this be *Purity*, there's too much of that among the members thereof; but that will never reclaim us, for we can ſee a great deal of *Impurity*, Corruption and Soul-ſickneſs in it; And as much the members of it confeſs themſelves, *That they are full of putrified ſores, from the crown of the head to the ſoal of the feet; and that there is no health nor ſoundneſs in them; And that they do thoſe things they ſhould not do, and leave undone thoſe things they ſhould do; And that they are Miſerable Offenders, and ſin in their Beſt Performances.* Indeed they ſpeak enough of themſelves to cauſe all wholſome, ſound, underſtanding People to ſhun them and their Church and Worſhip, as men ſhun a Contagious Diſeaſe or Infection: And it is manifeſt that the Nature and Spirit of Chriſtianity is wanting among them, and that the ſpirit of *Cain* (that worſhipper, who was the firſt Murderer about Religion) rules among them: And what weapons have they ever uſed to reclaim us (or call us) back again to worſhip as they do? have not their weapons been Carnal, and the courſe they have taken Force and Violence, by ſtirring up the Magiſtrates to make cruel Laws againſt us? which was [illegible] the true Chriſtians work not way to bring people to believe their Doctrine, and to worſhip as they did, but *Cains* way; and his wages will all Perſecutors about Religion receive from the hand of the Lord, as a juſt recompence of reward.

Judge.

They teach dangerous Principles; this for one, That it is not lawful to take an Oath. *You muſt not think their Leaders believe this Doctrine themſelves, only they perſwade theſe poor ignorant ſouls ſo; but they have an Intereſt to carry on againſt the Government, and therefore they will not ſuffer Subjection to it; and their end is Rebellion and Blood. You may eaſily know that they do not believe themſelves what they ſay, when they ſay it is not lawful to take an Oath, if you look into the Scriptures; that Text* (Mat. 5.) *where our Saviour ſaith,* [Swear not at all] *will clear it ſelf from ſuch a meaning as forbids Swearing, if you look but into the next words, where it is ſaid,* Let your communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay; *and it is ſaid,* an Oath is the end of all ſtrife; *this for the New Teſtament: And the Old is poſitive for Swearing. And they that deny Swearing, deny God a ſpecial part of his Worſhip.*

Anſw.

Answer.

In Our Principles are Truth, and according to the Scriptures of Truth; but the great Evil, to call *Light darkneſs*, and *darkneſs Light*, *Good evil*, and *evil Good*, is befalln this Generation; And that which leads to *Unity* and the Preſervation of Mankind is now counted *dangerous* and *deſtructive*.

Swearing, or taking of Oaths was not in the beginning, there was no need or occaſion for it, Strife was not begun; but when Man broke his *Unity* with God, and ran into Diſobedience, then Strife, and every evil work followed among men: Then to limit this evil that which Man followed into Tranſgreſſion, an Outward Law was added, and *Swearing* and *Vowing* under a Curſe came up; and ſuch as vowed were to perform their Vows unto the Lord, and thoſe that ſwore, were to ſwear by, or in the Name of the Lord, and not in or by the name of an Idol, or any other creature; and this was in the Fall, while the Wall of Patition ſtood: Now Chriſt who is the Reſtorer and the maker up of Breaches, (who was with the Father before any of theſe things were) in the Fulneſs of time, in a Body prepared, he appeared, to fulfill the Law, and to put an end to Sin, which was the occaſion of the Law) and to finiſh Tranſgreſſion, and to bring in Everlaſting Righteouſneſs, and to reſtore the fallen Man back again into the knowledge and unity of his Maker from whom he fell by diſobedience: And theſe things which the Father ſent him to do, he finiſhed and finiſheth; for all that received, believed, receivet and believe in him, and follow him in the Regeneration.

And while he was with his Diſciples, in that prepared Body in which he came to do the Will of the Father, he gave forth many Precepts and Commands unto them, among which this is one, minding them how it was in old time (*viz.*) under *Moſes* Law, how that they were to ſwear, and perform their Vows to the Lord; But ſaith he (*who was before Moſes was*) *I ſay unto you, Swear not at all, neither by one thing or another; but let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay: for whatſoever is more than this cometh of evil.* And *Moſes* Law, and the Old time ſaith alſo, *An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; ſmiting for ſmiting*, and that they ſhould *love their neighbour and hate their enemies*; but Chriſt taught and teacheth his Diſciples a harder leſſon, of Bearing and Forbearing, Love, Gentleneſs and Heavenly-kindneſs, that they might be more like their Heavenly

heavenly Father than *Moſes*'s Diſciples were; for ſaith he, *if you love them that love you*, and if you are friendly to your Brethren only, *what do you do more than ſinners? &c.*

So he that was before the Law, leads to the End of the Law, (which is *Love*) and brings thoſe that follow him, to be like-minded to him: as the Chriſtians in the Primitive times were, who ſaid, they had the mind of Chriſt; and did exhort one another to the ſame. And that this Command of Chriſt forbids all Swearing, is not only clear from the end, and circumſtance of the foregoing and following words, but alſo from the Apoſtle James's Exhortation; who ſaid *Above all things, my Brethren, Swear not; neither by Heaven nor Earth, nor any other Oath, leſt ye fall into condemnation.* And it is alſo written, *that if any ſay they love Chriſt, and keep not his Commandments, they are Lyars.*

So who ever reads theſe Scriptures (*Mat. 5. Jam. 5. 12.*) except the god of this world hath blinded the eye of their minds, may plainly perceive, that not only prophane ſwearing, but all manner of Swearing among the Diſciples of Chriſt; who brings all that truly follow him, out of the ſtrife which is among men, into Love, Peace and Unity, which was before Oaths, and where there is no need of any.

And the Swearing, Strife and Confuſion, Rebellion and Bloodthirſtineſs is among the falſe Chriſtians, who have the Name of Chriſt in their Mouths, but want his Spirit and Nature, being inwardly ravening Wolves, and by their fruits are they known.

And it is true which a Biſhop of *Englands* Church once ſaid; that *Among falſe Chriſtians Oathes are not to be regarded; and amongſt true Chriſtians there was no need of them.* Our Leader is Chriſt, whoſe Voice we hear and follow, and whoſe Riches and Wiſdom we partake of. And the poor and ignorant ſouls are ſuch as creep into houſes (ignorantly called Churches) and lead ſilly women captive, who are laden with ſins, and led aſide with divers luſts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth: While we were in *Englands* Church, we our ſelves were ſuch, as knew not the Phyſician of our ſouls, and ſo were full of putrified ſores, and unſoundneſs, and no health was in us; and we did thoſe things we ſhould not do, and left undone thoſe things

Biſhop Gauden his Book concerning Publick Oaths.

we should do, &c. which is the state of *England's* Church still as the Members thereof confess in their common Service; so, doth not divers lusts lead them? and are they not ever learning, and ever ignorant? And do not many thousands of them go down to the Pit without the knowledge of this precious Truth which makes free from Sin? Let God's Witness in the Consciences of its Members answer.

Our Interest which we desire to carry on, is Truth & Righteousness; and we shall rejoyce to see it established: though we are counted as the filth of the earth, and the off-scouring of all things; and not fit to live in this the Land of our Nativity, yet we have and do approve our selves friends to our Nation; and since the Lord hath made us a People, we have sought and endeavoured its temporal and Eternal Good, and have not been found contriving nor acting evil against Persons or Governments, since we were brought to the knowledge of that Truth we profess.

Therefore what ground of suspicion have we given to our cruel Persecutors, that they should suggest and surmise so much evil of us, that our Design is Rebellion and Blood? But what cause or occasion did harmless *Abel* give bloody *Cain* to kill him? Consider and see the same is now.

Judg.

Now you shall see how this Principle of not Swearing tends to the Subversion of the Government. First, *It denies the King the Security he ought to have of his Subjects for their Allegiance; which Oath they deny; and Security by bond is not so good: for thereby they are not engaged in Conscience, and they will only wait for a convenient season to forfeit their Bonds without hue and, and make sure work, in overthrowing the present Government, and secure their own securities: but an Oath binds the Conscience at all times, and that they cannot abide. Again, this Principle tends to subvert the Government, because without Swearing we can have no Justice done, no Law executed; you may be robbed, your houses broke open, your goods taken away, and be injured in your persons, and no Justice or recompence can be had, because the fact cannot be proved: the truth is, no Government can stand without Swearing: and were this People to have a Government among themselves; they could not live without an Oath.* Answ.

If this Judge had the Mind of Christ, he would not speak after this

this manner: for Government was before Swearing, and may be without it; and Oaths of Allegiance are but a novel thing to Government, hatched and imposed in the Apostacy, and was not among the true Christians, whose *Yea* was *Yea*, and their *Nay Nay* in all things; and the word and promise of a true Christian, is security sufficient, and their Consciences are bound to perform what they say and promise, as firm as they that Swear. There hath been no want of Swearing in this and other Nations called Christian, yet what subversions, turnings and overturnings, and treacherous dealing hath there been among the Princes and People thereof? and many have sworn to one Governour and Government, and then to another, and so to a third, and may be ready to swear to any that get to the helm of Government; and these Swearers and Conformers to any thing that is uppermost, make little conscience of Oaths, so they may save themselves from suffering: and if we were or had been of this spirit, we need not have suffered so exceeding deeply in our persons and estates in the time of *Oliver*, and the other Powers: And it is envy which blindes the understanding of this Judge, that makes him charge us, with not believing what we say, when we say, *It is not lawful for us to take an Oath*; and that we have a Design to carry on, and therefore will not Swear Allegiance to the King. Now if he did believe what he saith of us, that we should assert what we do not believe, or were so void of Conscientiousness; then how can he in reason expect that an *Imposed Oath should be so much binding to us, if we could be forced to take it*, especially since it is a maxime of their own, *that forced Oaths are not binding*. And this Judge and all such would do well to consider what weight their Oath hath upon their Consciences, whereby they are enjoyned to do equal Law and Execution of right to all; but how this is performed, let the wise in heart judge, when they go about with groundless Suggestions and Surmises against an Innocent People, to instigate both Juries and Country against them.

We are such as desire the good of all that are in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all Godliness and honesty under them; and have never yet been found Designers or Contrivers of their Destruction: Therefore the greater is this Judges evil, to endeavour to make us odious among the People; and the subtler he appears to be our Judge, being full fraighted with enmity against us without cause: and a Judge ought to be impartial, a man fearing

God, and judging for him, and not for men; such Judges Judgement will answer the righteous Principle of God in all Men, and such are a terror to the evil doers, and a praise to those that do well; and the Lord is with such in Judgement.

That which subverts, undermines and destroys Governours, Governments, and People, is Cruelty, Oppression, Tyranny, Sin and Rebellion against the God of Heaven, who hath power to give the Kingdoms of this World to whom he pleaseth: and who so rules in Righteousness, and answers the just and righteous Principle of God in all men, needs not fear subversion or undermining; 'tis the evil doer that is filled with fear and terrour round about.

We are not the Obstructers of Justice, nor the Cause of it, our witness against any evil doer, shall be as true as any that take Oaths; and if false, our penalty the same with false Swearers.

And further, Witnesses under *Moses's* Law, had no Oath administred to them, though the crime bore witness of, reached life; but if any bore false witness, the same punishment which should have been inflicted upon the person witnessed against, should be inflicted upon the false witness and witnesses: which thing we desire may be done unto us: So then the fault is in the Law, and the Judges of it, which denies true and faithful Evidence, (which in conscience they can believe) except it be under the Ceremony of an Oath. It is a shame for Christians to have a jealousie of each others testimony, except they Swear: it was enough in the first age of Christianity, to confirm any testimony without an Oath, to say [*Christianus sum*,] or, I am a Christian.

And if no Government could have been without taking of Oaths, the Author of all *true Government* and Rule, would not have said, *Swear not at all*; but swearing Oaths and Strife, is among men in the fall and degeneration, (and not among true Christians) where it will remain, till they know the Restorer of all things take away the cause of it, which is sin.

Judge.

Whereas they pretend in their scribbles, that this Act against Conventicles doth not [illegible] them, but such as under pretence of worshipping God do at their Meetings conspire against the Government. This is a mistake: for if they should conspire, they should then be guilty of Treason, and we should try them by other Laws; but this Act is against Meetings

to

to prevent them of ſuch Conſpiracy; for they meet to conſult, to know their numbers, and to hold correſpondency, that they may in a ſhort time be up in Arms.

Anſw.

Our Writings which he calls Scribbles, are words of Truth, and pretend no more than is true: for we are not the perſons committing thoſe Crimes the Act expreſly provides againſt, except we, under pretence of Tender Conſciences, do at our Meetings contrive Inſurrection, as late experience hath ſhewed, and meet alſo under colour and pretence of Religious exerciſe, and ſo make this Pretence of Religion, a Cloak to carry on and cover ſo me other Deſign, which we never did; (for we meet indeed and in truth to wait upon God, and to worſhip him;) Therefore this Law concerns us not, if it be not ſtrained beyond the expreſſed Reaſon of it, in the preamble, by our cruel Judges; who may be compared to evening Wolves, which are greedy to devour: and it is time enough to try us by this Act, or any other Law, when we do and commit the fact the Law hath expreſly provided againſt.

We meet not to conſult and to know our numbers, and to hold correſpondencies, nor to be up in arms in a ſhort time; for ſo to do is Conſpiracy; which he as good as confeſſeth and acknowledgeth that we are not guilty of; for he ſaith if we were, *he would try us by ſome other Law.* But theſe are evil ſuggeſtions, and wickedly imagined againſt us, in order to deſtroy us: this is unrighteous Judgement, and God will plead our Cauſe in the conſciences of our Adverſaries.

Judg.

I had the honour to ſerve the King at York, *upon the Tryal of thoſe wicked Plotters; and we found that thoſe Plots was hatched and carried on in theſe meetings; and we hanged up four or five of the Speakers or Preſters; whom we found to be chief Leaders in that Rebellion.*

Anſw.

It is and hath been our portion and lot to be numbred among Tranſgreſſors, by that envious ſpirit which ſeeks our ruine; though we have been found no hatchers or carriers on of trecherous Deſigns againſt any at our Meetings: and he might as well have compared us to thoſe Members of *Englands Church* hanged monthly at *Tyburn*.

Judg.

Judg.

Twarrant you their Leaders will keep themselves from the Third Offence, we shall not take them; if we could catch their Leaders, we should try them by some other Law, which, if executed, will take away their lives.

Answ.

We have no Leader but Christ Jesus, who is the Captain of our Salvation, and he is our Shepherd, and we hear his Voice, and learn of him, and are the Sheep of his Pasture, and in our Consciences we are bound and ingaged, because we love Him and his Paths of Purity, to follow Him, who leads our Souls to rest.

But for such which the Judge means by Leaders, who have been made instruments to turn our minds from Darkness to Light, and from the power of Satan to God, they, together with us, are resolved to keep to the Grace of God, (the true Teacher) which teacheth to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and Godly in this present world; and by this Grace (which appears to all men) are we taught and preserved from offending against any Just Laws once; and so he may well warrant himself and others, that they will not offend three times: And his blemishing those he calls Leaders, as if they put on others to suffer, and flee themselves, is altogether false; for it is well-known in the Nation, that many of them are in prison, where some of them have long remained for refusing to take the Oath of Allegiance; upon which account divers of them are *premunired*, and many suffer for meeting: howbeit, if you should be suffered to take away some of their lives, which they can freely give up, if called to it; yet know that the God whom we serve is unlimitted, and will open the mouths of thousands to bear witness against Unrighteousness: So when you do take and catch more of them, you will have no evil to say to their charge, nor nothing to accuse them for, but about matters appertaining to God's Kingdom; as Conscience, Faith, Worship and Religion; which the Civil Magistrate ought not to intermeddle withall, it belonging to God alone, to whom all must give an account for such things: and people ought not to be imprisoned and persecuted, and their lives taken away about Matters of Religion; for if a People have a false faith, and a misguided conscience, and are by reason of this faith and misguided conscience, exercised in a false

worship

worſhip and Religion; theſe People deſerve the more to be pitied, informed and dealt lovingly and tenderly with, than to be perſecuted, impriſoned, and deſtroyed, and ſo ſent quick to Hell: this is no Chriſtian Love, nor the way to Reſtore.

Judge.

This is a Merciful Law; it takes not away their Eſtates, it leaves them intire; only baniſheth them for ſeven years, if they will not pay an hundred pounds: and this is not for worſhipping of God according to their Conſciences, for that they may do in their own Families; but forſooth they cannot do that, but they muſt have thirty, forty, or an hundred others to contrive their deſigns withal.

Anſwer.

As he began his Speech in falſhood and enmity, ſo it ends in the ſame: for if this be a *Merciful Law*, as thoſe that are Judges of it intend to execute it, then we may truly ſay as it is written, *That the very Mercies of the wicked are Cruelty*; for ſome Felons and Murderers chuſe rather to be Hanged than to be Tranſported, Sold, and Baniſhed; all which are threatned to be executed upon us, and for no other cauſe but for worſhipping God in ſuch manner and way as we are perſwaded in our Conſciences, which are made *truly tender*; And we dare not make ſhipwrack of Faith and a good Conſcience, to ſave our Perſons and Eſtates from the mouth of the Devourer; For *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God* for Diſobedience; and Conſcience is as a thouſand Witneſſes, either to excuſe or accuſe; but ſearedneſs of Conſcience, as with an hot Iron, and deadneſs and blindneſs of heart is befaln many in this Generation: And from this ſtate ariſeth all ſuch merciful Laws as this the Judge ſpeaks of, in order to bring others (who are tender and fearful to offend God) into the ſame ſtate they are in themſelves; but we are in Conſcience conſtrained (if the God whom we ſerve ſo far permit) to ſuffer the Whore (the falſe Church) to drink more of our Blood, but of her Cup of Fornication wherewith ſhe hath made the Kings of the Earth and Nations drunk, we cannot drink; And we are of the Houſhold of God, and of one Family, and Members of one Body; and though thirty, forty, or an hundred, or a thouſand meet in one place or another together, for no evil deſign, why ſhould we be baniſhed for that? If this be *Mercifulneſs*, what is *Cruelty*? The Heatheniſh *Romans* ſhewed more mercy & manhood to *Paul*, in allowing him to have a Meeting in his own *hired houſe*, where he preached,

and

and taught *All* that came unto him, without let or any limit as to number, two full years, though he was a Prisoner. O that ever a People called *Christians* should be found more inhumane than *Heathens*, more merciless than bruit beasts, to banish Fathers and Mothers from their young and tender Children, and Children from their Parents, and Husbands from their Wives! and all this for no evil or wrong done to any mans Person, Estate or Goverment, but onely for endeavouring to keep their Consciences pure to God, and void of offence to him and all men.

POSTSCRIPT.

It is to be noted, that though the Judge at the beginning of his Speech said, that that day was appointed for their Tryal, yet they were not tryed; for one only, which he intended to begin withal, was brought from Newgate *to the Bar, being but a Boy and lately convinced of the evil of sin, and but as it were turning from it, into a conscientious fear and obedience to God. When he had ended his Speech, he asked if he were not at the* Bull & Mouth *on such a day? he said he was not. Then the Judge took occasion to vilifie and revile the Profession of the* Quakers, *to the Jury and People, and said, For all their pretentions to Truth and Plainness, could lie for their Interest, or to avoid Suffering. Then asked him the same question again, and he answered as before (for he was not there that day) then saith he, we shall prove that you were there: Will you stand to your Profession, said the Judge? Yes, said the Lad, and seal it with my Blood. Then were Witnesses called in to prove that he was at the* Bull and Mouth *such a day, but none could appear: Then the Judge soon perceived that no Witnesses would be found to serve his turn against this Lad, nor the rest. Then said he, There is a Disappointment fain out, but threatned some should suffer for it to their cost, and so dismist the Jury. This Disappointment being only want of Witnesses to bring about the designed purpose of the Court. They have bound some, that some of the Jaylors of* Newgate, *together with the Marshal and his men, shall be at our Meetings, and be their Witnesses against us at the next Sessions: so our Persecutors Cruelty is further manifested in this, that they should (Jezebel-like) hire, force, or command a company of hard-hearted men, who are daily exercised in Cruelty, and who have not the true fear of God in their hearts, to be our only Accusers: but the Righteous God, which seeth the plots and designs of the Wicked (against the Innocent and harmless) will reward them according to their doings.*

THE END.